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FROM:
**DoD Controlling Organization: Department
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AUTHORITY

**31 Dec 1974, GDS per DoD 5200.1-r;
Adjutant General's Office [Army] ltr dtd
29 Apr 1980**

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (26 Feb 69)

FOR OT UT 684196

5 March 1969

**SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 210th
Combat Aviation Battalion, Period Ending 31 October 1968
(U)**

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Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance
with paragraph 5b, AR 525-15. Evaluations and corrective actions should
be reported to ACSFOR OT UT, Operational Reports Branch, within 90 days
of receipt of covering letter.

2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate
benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations and
may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

1 Incl
as

Kenneth G. Wickham
KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

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MAR 24 1969
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 US Army Aviation Test Activities
 210th Combat Aviation Battalion

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 210TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96530

AVGC-DC

15 November 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 210th Combat Aviation Battalion for
the Period Ending 31 October 1968 (RCS CSFOR-65) (RI) (U)

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. (C) Section 1, Operations: Significant Activities.

a. There has been no change in this battalion's mission.

b. The 312th, 316th and 323rd Aviation Support Detachments were attached to the 210th Combat Aviation Battalion by General Order 67, Headquarters, 12th Combat Aviation Group, dated 18 August 1968. Attachment was effective on 31 July 1968. The current Battalion organization and station list is inclosure 1.

c. Changes in Command Structure.

(1) Battalion Headquarters:

(a) S-1: Major Richard L. Cox Jr., 090731, vice Major William Lozano, CF 110789 on 8 September 1968. Captain Lloyd C. Trombly Jr., 05022621 vice Major Richard L. Cox Jr., 090731, on 28 October 1968.

(b) S-2: 1LT Terry D. Williams, 05243621, vice Captain Paul J. Montana, 05023240 on 10 October 1968.

(c) S-3: Major Ben L. Breedlove, 04031070, vice Major Edward R. Castle Jr., 074971 on 30 August 1968.

(2) Subordinate Units:

(a) Major Willis C. Hardwick, 085556, assumed command of the 74th Reconnaissance Airplane Company from Major Ben L. Breedlove, 04031070, on 1 September 1968.

(b) Major Richard L. Cox Jr., 090731, assumed command of the 74th Reconnaissance Airplane Company from Major Willis C. Hardwick, 085556, on 28 October 1968.

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d. Unit Statistics as of 31 October 1968:

(1) Military:

Subordinate Unit	Officer		Warrant Officer		Enlisted		Total	
	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H
HHD	21	22	2	3	86	110		135
Cmd ApIn Co	29	51	1	2	64	6		141
25th Avn Co	8	8	18	18	89	85	115	111
54th Avn Co	10	17	28	19	120	96	158	132
73rd Avn Co	37	21	3	4	252	232	292	257
74th Avn Co	41	35	1	5	82	81	124	121
98th Trans Det	1	1	1	1	70	64	72	66
120th Avn Co	14	19	41	40	140	139	195	198
129th Med Det	1	1	0	0	8	6	9	7
184th Avn Co	32	31	1	2	95	93	128	126
243rd Sig Det	1	1	0	0	9	7	10	8
255th Trans Det	1	1	1	0	50	37	52	38
325th Sig Det	1	0	0	1	9	7	10	8
563rd Trans Det	0	0	0	0	24	18	24	18
622nd Sig Det	0	0	1	1	9	8	10	9
TOTAL	197	208	98	96	1107	1071	1402	1375

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(2) Civilian:

Subordinate Unit	DAC		VN		3rd Natl		Contractor
	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H	
HHD	0	0	7	7	0	0	0
Cmd ApLn Co	0	0	1	1	0	0	18
25th Avn Co	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
54th Avn Co	0	0	5	5	0	0	0
73rd Avn Co	0	0	19	35	0	0	0
74th Avn Co	0	0	7	7	0	0	0
98th Trans Det	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
120th Avn Co	0	0	7	7	0	0	0
129th Med Det	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
184th Avn Co	0	0	5	5	0	0	0
243rd Sig Det	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
255th Trans Det	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
325th Sig Det	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
563rd Trans Det	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
622nd Sig Det	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	0	0	51	67	0	0	18

e. Aircraft Status as of 31 October 1968. (See inclosure 2).

f. Operational results as of 31 October 1968. (See inclosure 3).

(1) Personnel management.

(2) Awards data.

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g. Installation Development (LPHAAr)

(1) An area 150 meters wide adjacent to the Southeastern defensive berm was cleared of 3600 rubber trees to provide adequate fields of fire.

(2) The following major construction projects were completed:

(a) 2100 meters of new berm and defensive positions.

(b) 2600 meters of new roadway.

(c) 21,000 square yards of aircraft parking ramp, paved with 1½ inches of asphalt.

2. (C) Section 2, Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations and Recommendations.

a. Personnel:

(1) Replacement Aviators for the 120th Assault Helicopter Company.

(a) OBSERVATION. This unit's mission is to provide rotary wing transportation for high ranking Free World Military and Civilian personnel. Fully qualified aviators with a high degree of aviation experience are needed in the unit due to the sensitive nature of this mission.

(b) EVALUATION.

(1) Eleven (11) percent of the forty-five (45) aviators assigned to the flight platoon (transporting passengers) have over two (2) years flying experience. The remaining eighty-nine (89) percent were assigned to Vietnam directly from flight school. All aviators assigned to the armed helicopter platoon were assigned to Vietnam directly out of flight school.

(2) On 9 November 1968, aircraft commanders for the helicopters supporting COMUS MACV and DEP COMUS MACV will be thirty (30) day losses. In order to retain qualified personnel in key company positions, it will be necessary to select aircraft commanders assigned directly from flight school who are not instrument qualified and have limited flight experience.

(c) RECOMMENDATION.

(1) A greater number of aviators be assigned to the 120th Assault Helicopter Company having a high degree of rotary wing flight time to provide the experience level necessary to perform the mission of transporting high ranking military and civilian personnel.

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(2) That aviators be selected at group level for assignment to this unit. They should be CW3s, CW4s or Captains and have a minimum of 1500 hours rotary wing flying time. Second tour Vietnam veterans are desired.

b. Operations.

(1) Sling Loading of U-1A Aircraft.

(a) OBSERVATION. On two occasions U-1A's being sling loaded by CH-47's have sustained incident damage when placed on the ground.

(b) EVALUATION. Investigation revealed that damage was caused by using too short a lifting strap which placed the lifted aircraft directly in the Chinook's rotorwash. Another cause is the Chinook's hovering slightly sideways instead of moving straight up and down when lifting or positioning the aircraft. The sideways motion places a load on one wing forcing the aircraft to bank, thus causing the wing tip and horizontal stabilizer to strike the ground.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. Recommend that U-1A aircraft being sling loaded be lifted and lowered vertically to reduce incident damage.

(2) Improving the Quality of KA 60 Panoramic Photography.

(a) OBSERVATION. During the conduct of visual and photographic reconnaissance missions at low altitudes (100-300 feet), the best results were obtained by utilizing the two(2) cycle per second mode.

(b) EVALUATION. High quality KA 60 forward oblique panoramic photography can be obtained when operating at low altitudes by selecting the 2 cycle per second mode. The 4 cycle per second mode will cause film stoppage and partial frame exposure due to the fast film advance speed.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That aviators attending the OV-1 Qualification Course (F-14) at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, be trained in the use of the KA 60 system and 2 cycle per second technique.

(3) OV-1 Photo Confirmation of Low Level Visual Sightings.

(a) OBSERVATION. To gain surprise during visual reconnaissance missions it is often necessary to approach a suspect area at low level. When surprise is attained and the enemy is caught exposed, it is desirable to take confirming photographs of the sighting. With the present camera installation, this is not always possible because of the requirement to position the KA 30 for an oblique photograph or reposition the aircraft for a KA 60 oblique. By the time this can be accomplished, the enemy has taken cover and the photos do not confirm the visual sightings, thus the report is given a lower reliability classification.

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(b) EVALUATION. Aviators' de-briefings have contained many items that were photographed for confirmation. When the film was viewed the sightings were not visible. On other occasions when the KA 30 was left on in the vertical position and the aviator happened to make a sighting at 12 o'clock, the film revealed such items as troops in wood lines, enemy vehicles and partially concealed gun positions. The likelihood of flying directly over surprise targets at low level is remote.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. A vertical panoramic camera be installed to provide coverage from 9 o'clock to 3 o'clock. To allow instant activation by the aviator, a control stick pulse mode switch is necessary.

(4) Plotting from RO-166 Recorder - Processor.

(a) OBSERVATION: Excessive residue has made inflight plotting difficult.

(b) EVALUATION. Excessive residue on the moving target (MT) side of SLAR imagery masks, or covers moving target returns. Difficulties have been experienced in adjusting the residue to a point that weather and aircraft altitude do not adversely influence the setting. The residue gain is adjusted to a point where only moving targets map on the MT side of the imagery. The plotting method, previously utilizing an acetate map overlay, has been changed to a plain acetate overlay. The observer marks the flight path, range lines, and moving targets on the MT side and transfers the overlay to the fixed target side for plotting. Prominent terrain features are then traced so the overlay can be fitted to a 1:500,000 scale map to determine geographic coordinates. The results of missions flown utilizing this technique have been very successful.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. This technique be taught in the Observer Training School at Fort Huachuca and that RO-166 systems be modified to incorporate fiducial marks to aid in accurate plotting.

(5) Removing or Inserting 2.75 Inch Rockets into XM-2 Launchers on the O-1 Bird Dog.

(a) OBSERVATION. When removing or inserting 2.75 inch rockets into the new XM-2 launchers, it is necessary to use some device to pry up the spring lock.

(b) EVALUATION. When prying up the spring lock, it is possible to damage the tubes.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. A smoke grenade ring be inserted into the hole in the spring lock. This allows the spring lock to be easily pulled up and rockets inserted or extracted quickly.

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(6) Location of Enemy Mortar Positions from the Air.

(a) OBSERVATION. Time is extremely important immediately following a mortar attack, because counter-mortar fire will sometimes prevent direct observation of the firing position.

(b) EVALUATION. To accurately locate an enemy mortar position, it is necessary for the VR aviator to arrive over the suspect location within 2 or 3 minutes after the mortar has stopped firing. Provided the area has not been fired into by counter mortar artillery, residual grey smoke from the mortar's propellant charges can often be detected. The maximum range of the 82mm mortar is 3,850 meters. Immediate crater analysis or troops can often give the primary direction to the weapon from its muzzle report. The VR aviator can locate enemy mortars in the daytime by immediately:

(1) Determining the general suspect area.

(2) Locating residual smoke from mortar tubes.

(7) Front Seat Failure in the O-1.

(a) OBSERVATION. During the past six months, several front seats in the O-1D and O-1G aircraft have come off their tracks. This results in the pilot falling rearward into the observer's area causing a very hazardous situation.

(b) EVALUATION. The problem is more predominant with the new armored seat which has recently been installed in several aircraft. This seat is heavier and has a higher center of gravity than the conventional seat. These characteristics, added to the fact that many rear seat passengers use the front seat to pull themselves out of the aircraft, have caused the flanges to spread and weaken until the seat will not remain properly affixed to the rails.

(c) RECOMMENDATION.

(1) Aviators brief all passengers to use the door frame of the aircraft, not the front seat, to assist themselves when getting out of the rear seat.

(2) Add to the O-1 checklist an inspection of the flanges holding the front seat to the rails.

c. Training. None

d. Intelligence. None.

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e. Logistics.

(1) Sub-Floor and Radio Compartment Dirt Accumulation in the O-1.

(a) OBSERVATION. Although crewchiefs sweep the floor of the aircraft daily, periodic and intermediate inspections continue to disclose large quantities of dirt in the sub-floor and radio compartment under the rear seat.

(b) EVALUATION. Dirt in this area creates radio failures, increases the weight of an already overweight aircraft, and increases wear on exposed control cables. Most of this dirt is brought in by pilots and observer's boots in the form of mud.

(c) RECOMMENDATION.

(1) A vacuum cleaner be issued for first echelon use.

(2) PSP "Welcome" mats be installed in the flight line area to be used for cleaning boots prior to entering aircraft.

(3) Strips of green tape be placed under the rear seat joining the floor and radio kick panel, thus sealing the gap where most of the dirt enters the sub-floor and radio compartment.

(2) Possible Detection of Broken Push Rods in Radial Engine Aircraft.

(a) OBSERVATION. The 54th Utility Airplane Company has had several cases of engine failure caused by broken push rods. On one occasion an impending engine failure was detected on the ground during an aviators pre-flight.

(b) EVALUATION. An aviator was making a normal preflight when he noted a circumferential bulge of approximately 1/8 inch on the exhaust push rod housing of the number two cylinder. Investigation by maintenance personnel revealed that the push rod had broken at this point and the two parts striking each other at their junction had deformed the push rod housing. Normal flight in this condition would cause an oil loss and possible engine seizure.


(c) RECOMMENDATION. All personnel pay particular attention to push rod housings during preflight and postflight inspections. If necessary a stand should be utilized to enable the individual to examine the upper most cylinders.

f. Organization. None.

g. Other. None.

3. (U) Section 3, Headquarters, Department of the Army Survey Information.

In compliance with letter, Headquarters, Department of the Army, Subject: Operations Report - Lessons Learned: Escape and Evasion Information, dated 6 August 1968, a negative report is submitted.


B. R. WRIGHT
LTC, AT
Commanding

4 Inclosures

1. Organization and Station List
2. 210th A/C Status
3. 210th Operational Statistics
4. Administration

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3. CG, 1st Avn Bde, ATTN: AVBA-C, APO 96384 (2)
4. DA, Headquarters, 12th Cbt Avn Gp, ATTN: AVGC-SC, APO 96266 (5)
5. Hq, 210th Cbt Avn Bn File Copies (3)

AVGC-SC (13 Nov 68) 1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 210th Combat Aviation Battalion for
the Period Ending 31 October 1968 (RCS CSFOR -65) (RI) (U)

DA, HEAD QUARTERS, 12TH COMBAT AVIATION GROUP, APO 96266 20 November 1968

TO: Commanding General, II FFORCEV, ATTN: AVFBC-RE-H, APO 96266

1. In compliance with AR 525-15 and USAFV Regulation 525-15, two (2) copies of subject report are forwarded.
2. This headquarters has reviewed subject report and makes the following comments reference paragraph 2a (1) page 4:

a. At present only 25% of the aviator replacements received by USAFV are considered experienced. The remainder, both commissioned and warrant officers, are recent graduates of the aviation school serving on their first aviation tour.


b. The majority of the experienced commissioned aviators received by this Group are field grade officers. The 120th Assault Helicopter Company is only authorized one Major for the position of Company Commander. The majority of the experienced warrant officers received have received additional qualification training in the AH-1G (Cobra) or CH-47 (Chinook) precluding their assignment to helicopter lift units. At present this group only has 80% fill of its CH-47 manning level and only 90% of its AH-1G aviator manning level.

c. No aviators are assigned directly to the 120th from flight school. Aviator replacement personnel furnished to this unit are selected from other assault helicopter companies within the Group after they have gained four to six months in-country experience and have a minimum of 350 hours of combat flying.

d. At the present there are insufficient replacements available with the qualifications desired to fulfill this request.

3. Concur with other comments and recommendations.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


ARTHUR M. MOUNTCASTLE
Captain, Infantry
Asst Adjutant

AVFBC-RE-H (15 Nov 68) 2nd Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 210th Combat Aviation Battalion for
the Period Ending 31 October 1968 (RCS CSFOR - 65)(RI)(U)

DA, HQ II FFORCEV, APO San Francisco 96266 4 DEC 1968

THRU: Commanding General, 1st Aviation Brigade, ATTN: AVBA-C, APO 96307

Commanding General, US Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DH, APO 96375

Commander-In-Chief, US Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-OT, APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

1. Subject report is forwarded.

2. This headquarters has reviewed and concurs with the Operational Report-
Lessons Learned of the 210th Combat Aviation Battalion, for the period
ending 31 October 1968, as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



O. B. FORY
1LT, AGC
Asst AG

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AVRA-C (15 Nov 68) 3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 210th Combat Aviation Battalion for the Period Ending 31 October 1968 (HCS CSFOR-65) (R1) (U)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE, APO 96384

9 DEC 1968

THRU: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVACC-DST, APO 96375
Commander-in-Chief, United States Army Pacific, ATTN: GFCF-CF, APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C., 20310

1. (C) This headquarters has reviewed this report, considers it to be adequate and concurs with the comments except for the following:

a. Paragraph 2a(1), page 4. Nonconcur with the recommendation that a greater number of aviators having a high degree of rotary wing experience be assigned the 120th AHC for the reason of transporting high ranking military and civilian personnel. There is a critical shortage of experienced rotary wing aviators, especially those that are second tour Vietnam veterans. These experienced aviators when assigned are equitably distributed throughout the Brigade to meet the requirements of the combat aviation units especially the assault helicopter companies which have a greater need for experience to meet the demands of sustained combat flying as well as to train the younger and less experienced aviator in a combat environment. The shortage of experienced aviators is further compounded in that second tour operational aviators are normally qualified in the CH-47 Chinook and CH-54 Sky Crane and consequently assigned to these units. The mission of the 120th AHC is no more sensitive in nature than that of the other aviation units of this command. An intensive training program and the assignment of a mission basis of available more experienced aviators, to missions carrying high ranking officials will insure maximum utilization of the experience level available to meet mission requirements.

b. Paragraph 2e(1), page 8. Nonconcur with the recommendation for vacuum cleaner issue for first echelon use. Power sources for operation of such equipment are not readily available at the widely scattered parking areas. Prompt attention to cleaning by the crew chief and the other expedients recommended should be adequate.

2. (C) The following additional comments are considered pertinent:

a. Paragraph 2b(7), page 7. Security of the pilot's seat is a pre-flight check and the addition of a specific inspection of the flanges would minimize the danger of seats coming off their tracks. The 210th CAB will be contacted to insure that EIRs have been submitted.

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AVBA-C

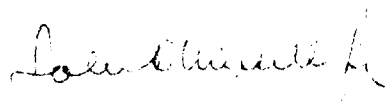
8 DEC 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 210th Combat Aviation Battalion for
the Period Ending 31 October 1968 (RCS CSFOR-65) (R1) (U)

b. Paragraph 2c(2), page 8. The push rod housing inspection is part of the pre-flight and daily inspections. Maintenance stands are available at organizational level to assist pilots and crewchiefs when conducting these inspections.

c. Paragraph 1f(1) and 1f(2) should read "See inclosures 4 and 5" respectively.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



JOHN D. MIXSELL
MAJ, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

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AVHGC-DST (15 Nov 68) 4th Ind (C)

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 210th Combat Aviation Battalion for
the Period ending 31 October 1968 (RCS CSFOR-65)(R1)(U)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375-1

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT,
APO 96558

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 October 1968 from Headquarters, 210th Combat Aviation Battalion.

2. (C) Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning replacement aviators for 120th AHC, page 4, paragraph 2a(1); 1st Indorsement, paragraph 2; and 3d Indorsement, paragraph 1a: Concur with comments in the 1st and 2d Indorsements.

b. Reference item concerning sling loading of U-1A aircraft, page 5, paragraph 2b(1): Concur. This recommendation will be provided for the information of all aviation units in the next issue of the USARV Aviation Weekly Summary.

c. Reference item concerning improving the quality of KA-60 panoramic photography, page 5, paragraph 2b(2): Concur. Recommend that higher headquarters address this recommendation to the responsible agency.

d. Reference item concerning excessive residue on the RO-166 recorder processor, page 6, Section 2, paragraph b(4): Concur. This is a matter of concern for higher headquarters.

e. Reference item concerning front seat failure in the O-1, page 7, paragraph 2b(7); and 3d Indorsement, paragraph 2a: Concur. This recommendation will be quoted for the information of all aviation units in the next issue of the USARV Aviation Weekly Summary.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



W. C. MOORE
CPT, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

Cy furn:
HQ 1st Avn Bde
HQ 210th CAB

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GPOP-DT (15 Nov 68) 5th Ind (U)

SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ 210th Cbt Avn Bn for Period Ending
31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558

5 FEB 1969

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

1. This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding indorsements and concurs in the report as indorsed.
2. The following comment is submitted regarding paragraph 2b(3): A tri-lens camera was developed by Chicago Aerial Corporation, and tested by 1st Air Cavalry Division that would be very effective in the described situation. Suggest reports on this camera be checked to verify its application. Consideration might be given to providing a pivot mount for the KA60 now installed in the OV-1 so it could be positioned either in the forward oblique position or in a vertical position. In the vertical position it would provide horizon to horizon (180°) coverage and photograph the area of observation of both the pilot and the observer.

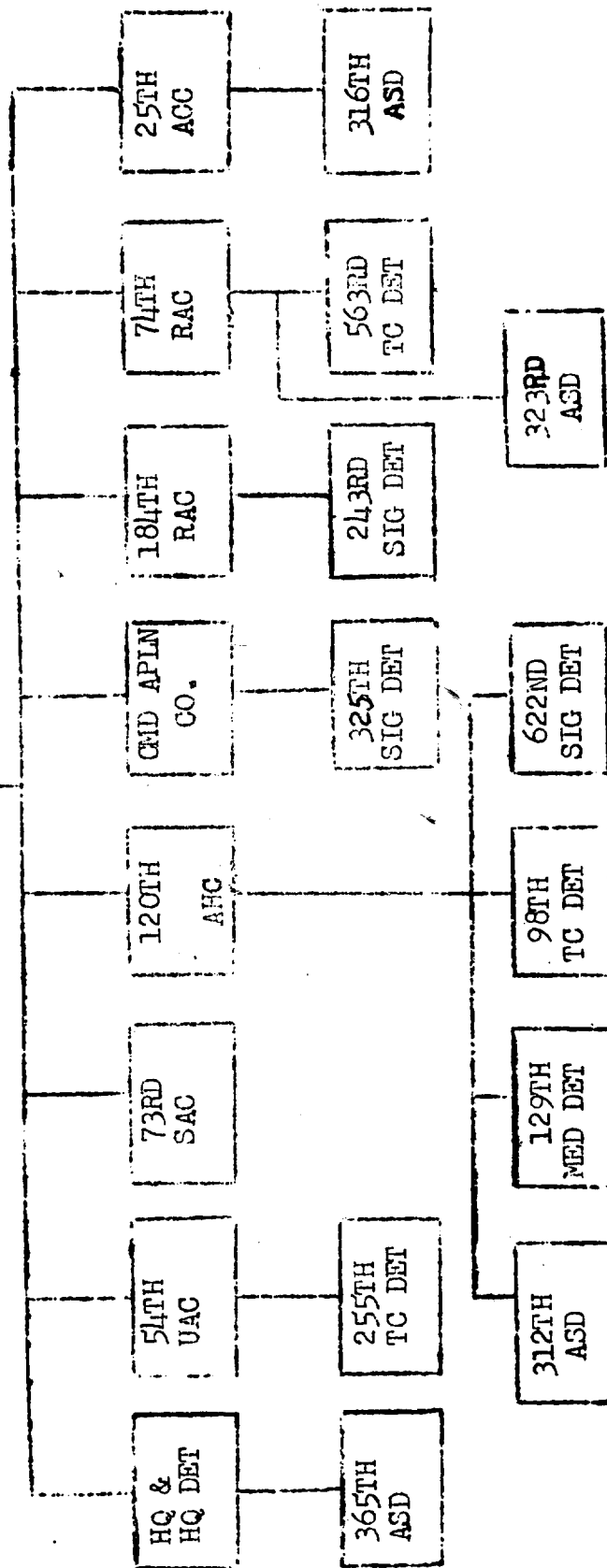
FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



C. L. SHORTE
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

Cy furn:
CG USARV

210TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION



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Security Classification

DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D

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1. ORIGINATING ACTIVITY (Corporate author)		2a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION	
HQ, OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310		CONFIDENTIAL	
		2b. GROUP	
		4	
3. REPORT TITLE			
Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Hq, 210th Combat Aviation Battalion, Period Ending 31 October 1968 (U)			
4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates)			
Experiences of unit engaged in counterinsurgency operations, 1 Aug - 31 Oct 1968.			
5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name)			
CO, 210th Combat Aviation Battalion			
6. REPORT DATE		7a. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES	7b. NO. OF REFS
15 November 1968		19	
8a. CONTRACT OR GRANT NO.		9a. ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
b. PROJECT NO.		684196	
c. N/A		9b. OTHER REPORT NO(S) (Any other numbers that may be assigned this report)	
d.			
10. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT			
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		12. SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY	
N/A		OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310	
13. ABSTRACT			

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